

oysters rocks in the bay, and that the growth and size of the oysters thereon is due more to the fact that this bottom has been rested and guarded for nearly two years. A prominent and reliable oysterman, who is a resident of a town on the Eastern Shore, made a statement recently in my presence, that at the *end of the dredging season* preceding the planting of these oysters a profitable day's work could be made catching oysters on this rock, and that it was also his belief (I will not say his knowledge for fear I will misquote him) that the larger part of the oysters planted had died, and that the present large catch of oysters, and size thereof, was primarily the natural product of this natural oyster bottom. The fact establishes very plainly that we could always have an abundance of oysters of fine size were all the oyster bottoms of the Chesapeake Bay and tributaries guarded and protected in accordance with the law.

There can be no hope, however, while those charged with the enforcement of the oyster law (particularly the cull feature) Act, in defiance thereof, as is now done in allowing cargoes of oysters to be caught, sold and used that in most instances (as can be proved) will show an exceedingly large percentage of oysters of the size prohibited under the statute.

There is no need of the State incurring the expense of planting oysters for public use, especially on natural oyster bottoms, as *such bottoms will always replete themselves*. To plant oysters on such bottoms and for the State to pay for the planting thereof is nothing more or less, in my opinion, than the giving of a subsidiary. If the State Fishery Force would carry out the law governing the *management and conservation* of this most important asset of the State, particularly the cull provision thereof, there would be found annually, on any natural rock within the State waters, an abundance of large-size oysters, as there is now said to be on "Daddy Dare."

Yours very truly,

(Signed) JAMES S. ARMIGER,
118 Market Place, Baltimore, Md.

[Which was read and referred to the Committee on Finance.]

By the President: Petition of the Women's Civic League, Fidelity Building, Baltimore, Maryland, by Miss Harlean James, executive secretary, in favor of the passage of the Bill allowing the usual appropriations to the Maryland Agricultural College. [Which was read and referred to the Committee on Finance.]